

City of Rockville Commission on the Environment
May 13, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Faith Klareich (FK), Seth Adams (SA), Steve Cardon (SC), David Davis (DD), Kris Dighe (KD), Beri Kravitz (BK), and Tolulope Odunlami (TO).

Absent: Michelle Clark (MC) and Geoff Sanders (GS).

Also in attendance: Staff Liaison Nate Wall (NW).

1. Welcome, News and Agenda Review

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm in the Blue Crab Room at Rockville City Hall.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

DD moves to approve March 11th meeting minutes as written; SC seconds. Unanimous approval of March 11th meeting minutes.

KD moves to approve April 8th meeting minutes as written; BK seconds. Unanimous approval of April 8th meeting minutes.

3. Science Day Debrief

FK thanked everyone for their involvement with making this year's Science Day a success. Bob Ekman has asked for feedback on how the event went – the Commission may wish to submit recommendations for next year. Particularly splitting up booths not based on content, but based on activity level (e.g., it was hard to compete for the attention of kids with battling robots in the corner). Also, may not want to arrange two similar booths next to each other (Commission booth vs. Mont Co. energy booth) – spread them out amongst other exhibits.

Another issue raised at Science Day was the mercury issue with CFLs. While this is a legitimate issue, it is definitely not a show-stopper for CFL use. The Commission may wish to develop a sticker that goes on each free CFL, pointing them to a website that describes proper CFL use and disposal, and explains the mercury issue to them.

FK mentioned that the Commission might also wish to do an issue paper on mercury in CFL bulbs. NW explained the research that the City had already done on the mercury issue, and that this information will be on our updated sustainability website.

4. Green Building Policy Recommendations

FK and NW had discussed the green building stakeholder meeting summary notes provided by Keystone, and agreed that they were too general. Meeting participants need to see that their comments were recorded accurately and thus heard, and it will be helpful to have a more detailed document to point to later as support for any recommendations that the Commission chooses to make.

Commissioners are to get any personal notes they have taken to NW ASAP, for incorporation into an expanded summary of the stakeholder meetings.

The next steps for the Commission are to come up with an outline of the green building structure, with general program recommendations for the City. Some high level points to consider:

1. What is the overall structure of the policy? What are meaningful segments (e.g., >5,000 sq. ft? >10,000?). More than just commercial vs. residential?
2. What are key features of the green building program for each segment?

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3. Considerations for a phased approach: may want to recommend that the City tackle the big impacts first, then move on from there.

Commission brainstorming session for green buildings set for Monday May 19th. Will also be on the June meeting agenda.

5. Working Group Updates

Watershed Protection Working Group

The Watershed Protection group has been planning the details of the Maryvale Cleanup scheduled for May 31st from 10am – Noon. There will be a cleanup, as well as stream monitoring, and an IWLA member will be on-site to assist in the construction of two “litter skimmers” for the stream. This will be a “Rain or Shine” event.

NW to check on availability of plastic fencing, zip ties, etc. from our stockroom.

High Performance Building and Outreach Working Group

The HPB and Community Outreach working groups have been focusing on the Science Day booth.

NW to send out PDFs of City’s outreach materials.

6. Staff Updates

NW mentioned that the Audubon Naturalist Society will be holding a free benthic macroinvertebrate (BMI) stream monitoring class tomorrow, 5/14, from 7-9pm at their Woodend Sanctuary. This is an excellent opportunity to learn to identify the BMIs used for biological stream monitoring. SC will be taking the course.

The Planning Commission will be putting the final touches on their draft of the Zoning Ordinance on May 21st. The schedule is to present the zoning ordinance to Mayor & Council on June 9th, then hold Public Hearings on June 16th and 30th.

There will be a City “Going Green” booth at this year’s Hometown Holidays, as well as some eco-friendly companies.

Mark Charles has been working on putting together a commercial recycling ordinance for the City, enforceable by Montgomery County. The goal is a July adoption.

7. Possible Closed Session

The Commission met in closed session to discuss the Commission Chair appointment. The one-year Commission Chair position expired on April 30th. The current Chair serves until either they are reappointed, or a new Chair is appointed.

TO moves, DD seconds, to recommend FK for reappointment as Chair of the Environment Commission. Unanimous vote to recommend FK for reappointment.

Due to the general chaos surrounding environmentally-related activities in April, it was determined that this was a bad month for the Chair position to be appointed. NW will check with the City Clerk to see if FK’s reappointment can be delayed until June or July, to shift the effective term dates for the Chair out of the April timeframe.

8. Wrap-Up and Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.